holes and vaults, located in access controlled areas, which are under constant surveillance.

(b) The method followed by India for disposal of nuclear waste is as per international standards and as followed by developed countries. The disposal operations are carried out under the surveillance of regulatory authorities.

Nuclear technology for health care

1659. SHRI S. AGNIRAJ: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there is a proposal to develop nuclear technology for health care and food securities;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) by when it would be implemented; and

(d) what would be the cost of these projects?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ATOMIC ENERGY (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE): (a) The Department of Atomic Energy (DAE) is already involved in utilizing radiation technology for sterilisation of medical products and processing of food products. In total, there are three plants—one for sterilisation of medical products, other for hygenisation of spices and other products and the third one for sprout inhibition of onions.

(b) DAE is not setting up any new such plants. However, DAE is encouraging private entrepreneurs to set up such plants. A few MOUs have already been signed in this regard.

(c) and (d) Departmental plants are already completed. Three plants in private sector are in various stages of implementation and may come up in next 1-2 years of time. Cost of a typical industrial scale radiation processing plant is around Rs. 7 crore.

Threat posed by Uranium Radiation to the lives of Adivasis in Meghalaya

1660. SHRI NANDI YELLAIAH: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the infection of mysterious diseases caused by radiation in villages situated around uranium rich Domiasiyal

area in Meghalaya is increasing and the cases of TB and Asthma are increasing in tribal population there alongwith premature ageing and the incidents of deaths; and

(b) if so, the details of the measures taken/proposed to be taken for protecting life and health of tribal population of the area?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ATOMIC ENERGY (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

Disruption of STD services

1661. SHRI S.M. LAL JAN BASHA:
SHRI KARNENDU BHATTACHARJEE:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that STD services were disrupted between Delhi and various cities in the last week of October, 2002;

(b) what were the technical reasons therefor;

(c) whether Government have made any estimate of revenue loss to BSNL and MTNL all over the country due to such disruption;

(d) if so, whether any steps are proposed to avoid such disruptions in future; and

(e) the details of the measures proposed by MTNL and BSNL?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SANJAY PASWAN): (a) STD services between Delhi and some of the cities were partially affected during the last week of October 2002.

(b) There is no specific and identifiable technical reason for the partial disruption of STD services. The work-to-rule programme by a section of engineering executive staff delayed restoration of STD services to some extent.

(c) It is very difficult to quantify the loss in terms of money in such cases, as the traffic was showing intermittent failure in a few directions only, and was able to pass through alternate/overflow routes in some of these routes.